

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING - MONDAY MARCH 9, 2009**

**HB 6370 - An Act Concerning a Middle College System**

**Presented by: Cameron Champlin, Representing UA Plumbers and Pipe Fitters  
Local Union 777**

**Senator Gaffey, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee, Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Local Union 777 would like to voice its opposition to this bill. We have been involved with the Apprenticeship Division of the Labor Department through our apprenticeship program since its inception. If the apprenticeship programs are removed from the oversight of the Labor Department we believe it will weaken the programs as we know them now. The Middle College Systems will have to many items to attend to and apprenticeship will not be one of its main priorities.**

**Both the Unions and Non- Union organizations rely on the programs to generate future journeymen to carry on the industry as workers and of course some of them to become employers. The programs that are in place now have served us very well in the past and the expertise of the Labor Department employees have made that possible.**

**As testament to the fact that we are dedicated to our beliefs in these programs we all, both Union and Non - Union factions, came together in 2003 to help conserve the Apprenticeship Division. That department's personnel was reduced from fourteen to one. The recipients of the services from that division had a fee instituted to be deposited into a non- lapsing account in the Labor Department dedicated to the Apprenticeship Division. The fee structure was TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS for each apprentice to register and THIRTY DOLLARS to be paid by employers for each registered apprentice in his or her employ. This bill would have that fee deposited into the General Fund.**

**There is another bill that would double this fee and put it in the General Fund. We all know that if that is done the money that was supposed to help keep the Apprentice Division will never be used for that purpose. Although we are in a difficult financial time this is not the time to cut back on programs that train people for whatever employment opportunities become available now and in the future. Remember one of Connecticut's greatest assets is its well trained productive workforce.**

**Thank you for considering my testimony. I can be reached at (860) 443-9485, Cell (860) 287-0020 or email [camc@att.net](mailto:camc@att.net)**